

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.(currently amended): A source-side communication apparatus which selects a best path suitable for routing a call, comprising:

source-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation;

source-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data;

connection releasing means, ~~for releasing a particular connection when triggered by~~ said source-side best path finding means ~~has found~~ upon discovery of a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path ~~that is~~ that is currently used, for releasing that particular connection while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls; and

new best path setting means for performing a call connection procedure by using the new best path, after said connection releasing means has released the current connection.

2.(original): The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said connection releasing means releases connections on an individual connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

3.(original): The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said new best path setting means sets up a connection over the new best path, while masking particular existing connections.

4.(currently amended): A destination-side communication apparatus which selects a best path suitable for routing a call, comprising:

destination-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation;

destination-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data;

~~connection release requesting means, for sending a connection release request for a particular connection when triggered by~~ said destination-side best path finding means ~~has found upon discovery of~~ a new best path that is more suitable for ~~[[the]]~~ a particular connection than a path ~~[[being]]~~ that is currently used, ~~for sending a connection release request for that particular connection~~ while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls.

5. (original): The communication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said connection release requesting means requests releasing of connections on an individual connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

6.(currently amended): A communications system which selects a best path suitable for routing a call, comprising:

(a) a source-side communication apparatus comprising:

source-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing

routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation,

source-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data,

connection releasing means, ~~for releasing a particular connection when triggered by~~ said source-side best path finding means ~~has found~~ upon discovery of a new best path that is more suitable for ~~[[the]]~~ a particular connection than a path being currently used, ~~for releasing that particular connection~~ while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls, and

new best path setting means for performing a call connection procedure by using the new best path, after said connection releasing means has released the current connection; and

(b) a destination-side communication apparatus comprising:

destination-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation,

destination-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data, and

connection release requesting means, ~~for sending a connection release request for a particular connection when triggered by~~ said destination-side best path finding means ~~has found~~ upon discovery of a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path ~~[[being]]~~ that is currently used, ~~for sending a connection release request for that particular connection~~ while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls.

7.(original): The communications system according to claim 6, wherein said connection releasing means releases connections on an individual connection basis, or on an

individual port basis.

8.(original): The communications system according to claim 6, wherein said connection release requesting means requests releasing of connections on an individual connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

9.(original): The communications system according to claim 6, wherein said new best path setting means sets up a connection over the new best path, while masking particular existing connections.